

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, claims 1 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 2, and claims 2 and 17-19 are canceled. No new issue is introduced in the amendment. Claims 1, 3-10 and 12-16 are pending in this application.

**Rejection in Paragraph 2**

In paragraph 2 of the final Action, claims 1, 2, 10, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Petersen.

Claim 1 now amended includes the limitation such that cut-off unit is constructed to vary a cut-off length of the web fed from said printing unit, disclosed in claim 2 now canceled.

Petersen does not disclose this feature now incorporated into claim 1. In this respect, it was held by the Examiner that Petersen discloses "the cutting system is variable to create separation of cut sheets 7a, 7b" in column 2, lines 40+.

However, it is held at column 2, lines 43-46 of Petersen that "Preferably the folded products that have been cut to size, hereinafter called sheets 7a, 8a or 7b, 8b, undergo a certain advancement, so that they are spaced apart at intervals."

Therefore, it can only be read such that the speed of the cut sheets 7a, 7b after the separation is variable relative to the speed of the webs 1a, 1b before the separation. Petersen attempts to reliably carry out an appropriate processing by decelerating the speed of the sheets in a bookbinding processing stage even when the running speed of the webs is fast in a high-speed printing. As a result, Petersen includes belt conveyors which vary the sheet-conveying speed. However, Petersen does not consider the variable cut-off, which carries out the cut-off operation with the variable cut-off length of the web.

The feature now clearly recited in claim 1 is not anticipated by Petersen.

**Rejection in Paragraph 5**

In paragraph 5 of the final Action, claims 1, 2, 8-10 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reffert in view of Vijuk. It is assumed that claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C.103(a) as being obvious over Reffert in view of Vijuk.

Reffert discloses a folding device comprising a cut-off unit with cutting mechanisms/rollers 14; a first belt conveyor 10a; a second belt conveyor 10b; and a downstream processor, wherein the first belt conveyor 10a operates at a slower speed than that of the second belt conveyor 10b. Accordingly, the speed of the cut sheets is accelerated (column 7, lines 4+).

Also, in Reffert, a collecting/catching cylinder 1 with grippers 2, folding blades 3 and a folding cylinder 4 form folded creases transversely to the conveying direction as known in the art. Further, Reffert includes a stop member 23 for receiving the sheets.

In Reffert, however, it is not disclosed or suggested that cut-off unit is constructed to vary a cut-off length of the web fed from said printing unit.

Vijuk discloses the application to the variable cut-off, which can vary the cut-off length of the sheet (column 4, lines 55 to 60), and that a belt conveyor 108 is activated by a variable speed drive unit (column 7, lines 42 to 46).

However, it is not clear whether or not the variable speed drive unit described in Vijuk varies the speed in the middle of conveying the sheet.

Therefore, even if the inventions of Reffert and Vijuk are combined, the idea as described in claim 1 of the present invention is not obtained, wherein the predetermined processing can be carried out at the downstream side of the processor even if the cut-off length of the sheet varies at the upstream side of the processor by varying the sheet-conveying speed during the conveying time from the time of receiving the sheet to the time of passing the sheet.

As a result, rejection for claim 1 of the present invention cannot be satisfied due to, at least, the above-mentioned reasons.

In the present invention, the sheet-conveying speed varies during the sheet-conveying time, so that the downstream of the cut-off unit is able to carry out the cut-off operation with the variable cut-off length of the web fed from the printing unit, receives the sheet at approximately the same speed as the sheet-conveying speed on the

upstream side, and passes the sheet to the processor on the downstream side at approximately the same speed as the sheet-conveying speed in the processor. The cited references do not disclose the above-mentioned structure.

Therefore, the present invention can obtain the specific effect of "being able to carry out the predetermined processing by the processor on the downstream side even if the cut-off length of the sheet varies on the upstream side".

**Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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